

Hildegard Schmoller/Lukáš Fasora

CfP: SKÖTH/SKČRH Annual Conference

Czech Workers in Vienna 1868-1918

Location: 1040 Vienna | Kreuzherrengasse 1 | Rektoratssaal

Date: 26-27 September 2024

Organizer: Permanent Conference of Austrian and Czech Historians on the Common Cultural Heritage (SKÖTH/SKČRH)

In cooperation with: - Masarykova Univerzita Brno, Historický ústav
- Universität Wien, Institut für Osteuropäische Geschichte

During the Habsburg Monarchy, the imperial capital of Vienna had a great attraction for people from all parts of the monarchy, especially those from the Bohemian lands. Both German and Czech-speaking people migrated in large numbers and shaped and changed Vienna.

This year's SKÖTH conference will focus on the Czech workers who came to Vienna between 1868 and 1918 to live and work there. The focus is deliberately on the labour force. The conference and the publication that follows are dedicated to the origin of the workers, their migration history (reasons, ways and means, etc.) as well as their arrival in Vienna. How long did they stay or were they allowed to stay? What differences and similarities existed between seasonal workers and permanent "migrants"; between individual occupational groups and genders? What repercussions existed for their regions of origin?

The Czech labour migrants have different regions of origin, social backgrounds and identity constructions. To what extent and how did the construction of a collective identity "Viennese Czech labour force" and partial identities such as the "Ziegelböhm" take place? How did they define their relationship to the "home nation"? What were the acculturation strategies in this group or parts of it, which could range from integration, assimilation, and separation to marginalization? The role of the censuses with their extraordinary mobilization potential regarding the formation of national identities is an exciting topic that is worth examining in more detail.

The workers' associations, which emerged both from the transformation of craftsmen's associations and from newly founded ones, as well as by splitting off from larger factions with their tasks, their members (male and/or female workers) and their inherent hierarchies, represent a central aspect of the labour movement in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The ways and forms of cooperation between the Czech (workers')

associations and with other (workers') associations (such as the German-speaking workers' associations in Vienna) are also an important element, as is the relationship between Czech and German-Austrian political forces and the Czech working class in Vienna.

Strategies for social mobility - as well as social barriers specific to the Czech environment in Vienna - are another topic to be discussed at the conference. (Important in this section would be, for example, questions about the generational change in the labor market, the role of education, the transition from seasonal and temporary work to permanent employment).

The reconstruction of the social situation and everyday life of the (immigrant) Czech labour force, especially that of women and children, would also be a rewarding topic. A comparison with workers of other ethnic origins would also be of interest here. This also raises the question of overlaps and interactions between different forms of discrimination, marriage strategies and birth behavior, the housing situation of (Czech) workers in Vienna, their social support networks and the importance of the welfare and school system.

You are welcome to suggest further topics that deal with the Czech workers in Vienna.

Submission details

Abstracts in German, Czech or English with a maximum length of 2000 characters and a short bio should be submitted to Dr. Hildegard Schmoller (hildegard.schmoller@univie.ac.at) and Prof. Lukáš Fasora (fasora@phil.muni.cz) by

15 April 2024.

Publication of the contributions is planned. Submission of manuscripts: 31 March 2025.

The working languages of the conference are German and Czech, with simultaneous translation. Presentations in English are also welcome.

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